

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An electronic communication system for use onboard an aircraft includes a server and a plurality of input ports for connection with passenger computing devices. Passengers can send and retrieve electronic messages (e-mail and/or attachments) using a proxy-based web server access to the user's own e-mail service provider. The system receives proxy-based commands from the user's computing device and translates those commands into web-based commands that enable communication with the passenger's e-mail accounts. The passenger may send e-mail communications by composing a message on the passenger computing device and sending it via the web-based proxy server. E-mail messages may also be retrieved from one or more passenger e-mail accounts. In one embodiment, the system transmits only e-mail summary information to the airborne server and provides the summary information to the passenger. The passenger may select one or more e-mails and/or attachments for subsequent retrieval, thus limiting passenger expense for retrieval of unwanted or unnecessary e-mails and/or attachments. The system may also display cost information associated with uploading the e-mail and/or attachments to enable the passenger to select those desired messages for subsequent transmission.